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Record

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Restoration keeps mural's message alive

CHICAGO (BP) — The corner of Sheridan Road and Sunnyside Avenue used to be one of the most dangerous intersections in Uptown Church's Chicago neighborhood.

Drug houses flourished. Eighteen rival street gangs roamed within a few blocks of each other. Shootings claimed the lives of innocent children.

That was six years ago. Although life is still far from idyllic here, the drug houses have been rehabbed. Children are on the streets, seemingly playing as if they didn't have a care in the world. Gangs are not as prevalent.

One of the few remaining signs of the gangs can be found on the sidewalks, scribbled there years ago when the concrete was first poured — an occasional epitaph or the names of gangs followed by the word "killer."

The "racial reconciliation" mural first came together in 1995, said Brian Bakke, Uptown's director of community ministries.

That's when he and artist Gregory King met with a half-dozen high school students twice a week for three months to brainstorm the design.

Beginning from the left, the mural depicts God's creation of the earth, with plants and animals flowing from a starburst in the upper left corner.

As eyes travel along the mural, God's multicolored hand sprinkles silhouettes of different hues gliding through a blue expanse.

A Bible verse tells people passing by that God said all of this was good.

The next section reveals man's sin — symbolized by a medieval mace thundering down and shattering the earth. The words on the weapon's handle include hatred, lust, racism, envy.

The earth's shards fly together to the right, recombining into a stained-glass Jesus surrounded by people of all ages and races.

Gal. 3:28, painted in bold letters from the top to the bottom of the wall, reminds onlookers that they are one in Christ.

As he steadily retouched a section of the earth destroyed by sin, King said the mural delivers an important message to the community, where women are still abused by their husbands and boyfriends and racial uneasiness abounds.

King, a Kentucky native who moved to Chicago in 1994 and began working on murals with Uptown Church from his first day here, moved to New York last year to further his career as an artist.

He's been back in Chicago since July 10, after Bakke called to invite him to be part of the restoration process. The mural appeals to him because "I've



MURAL WITH A MESSAGE — A stained-glass Jesus, surrounded by people of all ages and races, makes up part of the Uptown Church's racial reconciliation mural. The Chicago church and many volunteer groups have been working to restore the 1995 mural since it was painted over this summer. (Photo by Michael Leathers)

always been interested in doing something beyond a studio experience with my art."

Dipping cotton swabs mounted on sticks — giant Q-Tips — into acetone, volunteers rub the soaked cotton gently across each brick.

When Uptown Church first prepared to paint the mural in 1995, Bakke sought out the neighborhood's gangs because the wall had been covered with tombstones — a memorial to slain gang members.

Receiving their permission was vital, he said, because the painters' lives would have been in danger if the gangs didn't approve.

Fifty people were involved in the original painting of the mural, ranging from teenagers to children, from homeless women to members of Uptown Church and other churches.

The restoration has cost about \$12,000, Bakke said, and many churches from across the country have sent in money to help with the project.

When it's all done, it will be sad news to merchants of nearby stores, where Bakke has been cleaning out entire shelves of supplies.

Bakke said the

timetable is to be done by Sept. 2, when Uptown Baptist will hold an outdoor worship service and celebration.

The whole mural will receive a polyurethane coat to protect it from graffiti and similar damage. If some wayward graffiti mars the mural down the road, it will be an easy task to wipe it off.



RESTORATION VOLUNTEER — Jennifer Tufts, a student at Southwest Baptist University of Bolivar, Mo., is among the many volunteers who have worked on the mural's restoration from a scaffold. (Photo by Michael Leathers)



LABOR OF LOVE — Volunteers line scaffolds and work from the sidewalk to restore the mural on a brick wall just a few blocks from Uptown Church of Chicago. (Photo by Michael Leathers)

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

'Hurry sickness' epidemic

4

Directions

5

Terminations down

7

Practical Principles

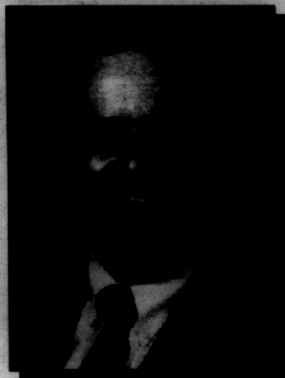
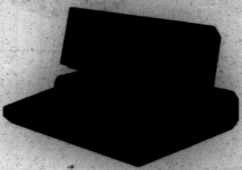
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Gangs would add that word after the name of a rival gang to show disrespect. Offended rivals would often respond with deadly force.

It all changed because of a mural depicting various facets of faith. The colorful collage stretching along the brick wall of the Unique Thrift Store was at one time a memorial to slain gang members.

Now, for six days a week since early July, people from Uptown Church and from the neighborhood on Chicago's north side, along with groups from across the nation, have been laboring feverishly to rescue the mural, after a miscommunication from a local alderman's office gave another group the go-ahead to paint over it.

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Missing in action

In Baptist churches all across Mississippi, happy voices have begun to once again fill the hallways as summer begins to fade and our children make their way to Royal Ambassador (RA) and Girls in Action (GA) meetings.

As the boys settle in for their weekly RA session eager to know how to grow into real men who love Kingdom work, they thrill to the action stories of missionary adventure — especially when the heroes of the real-life stories are boys their age.

They soak up the presentations given by missionaries who visit their classrooms.

They crave the tactile exhilaration of handling everything the missionaries bring with them.

They listen raptly as the missionaries talk of ancient cultures and unusual traditions in the areas where they served. They become completely swept away in the moment.

Even at their tender age, they have begun to grasp how important it is to be personally involved in missions. As boys are apt to do, they eagerly anticipate manhood and ask questions about how missions will fit into their lives in years to come.

In RAs, the foundation for a new generation of male church leadership is laid. Seeds of thought and action are planted that will fully bloom only in the decades to come.

The boys earnestly seek to understand what will be expected of them when they are men, in the context of a church program that is perfectly designed to teach them how to do just that.

And the boys are taught these lifelong traits of Christian manhood by... women.

That's no slam against the women who have stepped outside their area of responsibility to pick up the slack where the men of the church have so clearly failed. Surely God will bless them for doing so.

There's simply no way to paint a pretty picture over the scandal of male leadership missing in action when it comes to missions education. In too many Mississippi Baptist churches, men have clearly failed to assume the mantle of leadership for raising our boys in the tradition of missions education.

It's the same old excuses offered for dodging other church duties. Gotta work late. RA time just happens to conflict with my tee time.

You don't understand, pastor. I have back trouble. I'm on medication. I suffer from headaches or gout or bad kidneys. The material is boring. My boss won't let me rearrange my work schedule. I'm not a good speaker. You really need someone more educated. The dog ate my homework.

So, what's your excuse?

If the men of the church don't get involved with these impressionable young boys who are so eager to know more about their faith, how can we expect them to grow into responsible church leaders of the future?

From whence will come our missions leaders and missionaries for the next generation, if we fail at this important task? When we call out in our old age for someone to whom we can pass our mantle, what if no one answers?

The late singer Harry Chapin composed a song called Cat's in the Cradle. It was about a man who didn't realize until it was too late that his son had grown up never knowing his busy, distracted father.



As the instructive tune nears its end, the now-elderly father realizes an important truth after being put off once again by his busy, distracted adult son: *As I hung up the phone it occurred to me/My boy was just like me./He'd grown up just like me.*

The cat may indeed be in the cradle in many of our churches, in one of the areas where it really counts: male leadership in missions education. It will be tragic indeed if an entire generation of boys grow up to be like us — busy, distracted, uninterested in the really important things in life.

Where do you stand?

GUEST OPINION:



MLSMO: helping those who go, serve

By Weaver McCracken, associate
MBCB Collegiate Ministry Dept.

Bill Kirkpatrick, BSU director at Delta State University in Cleveland, noted that his "students were amazed at the num-

ber of colleges and universities in the Boston area and how difficult it is to do ministry on these campuses."



The need overwhelmed both students and staff. Christy Carley, BSU director at Baptist-affiliated Mississippi College in Clinton, noted that "God worked not only in the lives of Bostonians, but also in the lives of our Mississippi BSU students."

"That week gave our students the vision for what God is doing all over our nation," she pointed out.

Tracy Moser, BSU director at BMC, summarized the general feelings of those who served: "Our experience in Boston was an excellent one."

Michael Ball, BSU director at Mississippi State University in Starkville, noted, "There is a great need for campus ministers in this highly academic climate."

With 80 college campuses in Boston, there are currently only five BSU directors working on those campuses.

Each year the MLSMO provides vital assistance in mobilizing college students for mission causes. Your giving results in a fulfilled desire of a particular student by providing needed assistance in defraying costs.

The college students of our state are a rich resource ready to be tapped, and Mississippi Baptists are to be commended for helping them to go and serve through the Margaret Lackey State Missions Offering.

GAs seek eyeglasses for Honduras ministry

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — A nationwide effort by Girls in Action (GA) groups is touching thousands of lives in the struggling country of Honduras.

GA is the organization for girls in the first through sixth grade sponsored by Woman's Missionary Union auxiliary of the Southern Baptist Convention. A key facet in each of GA meetings involves learning about missionaries and their work.

After learning about missionary Jo Anne Foreman and her eyeglass ministry during their May 2001 GA meetings, girls across the country wanted to help.

Sending more than 3,000 pairs of eyeglasses, GAs gave visible evidence of their interest and concern for those in need.

During the month of May, GA magazines Discovery, GA World, and Aware featured missions work in Honduras. Foreman, one of the featured missionaries, conducts eye clinics in rural areas.

As a missionary for the International Mission Board, Foreman strives to help improve the health of Hondurans, especially those living in rural areas.

Hurricane Mitch devastated the country in 1998, and much

of the nation remains impaired. Poverty accompanied by poor living conditions impedes the

For more than 10 years, Foreman has sought to meet the physical and spiritual needs of the Honduran people through the clinics.

Foreman examines the eyes of those who visit the clinic, and she presents Honduras citizens with pairs of eyeglasses that match his or her prescription.

After glasses are distributed, clinic volunteers share with patients the circle of love within the ministry.

"We tell them that God loves them so much that he touched someone's heart to provide the glasses, he touched other people to help in cleaning the glasses, finding the prescription for them and getting them to Honduras," Foreman said.

Before the glasses ever reach Honduras, Christians in the United States diligently work toward the ministry's fruition.

Nearsighted and farsighted people around the country send their old or

new spectacles to Foreman's home church, Central Church, Marion, Ohio.

A group of women from the church cleans the glasses under the supervision of Savage. Her son John identifies the prescriptions of the donated glasses using a lensometer.

The women then sort, package, and label the glasses according to their prescriptions.

Rural churches in Honduras offer their buildings for the clinics, and volunteers from the churches help pilot the ministry.

The pastor and church members often visit the newly spec-

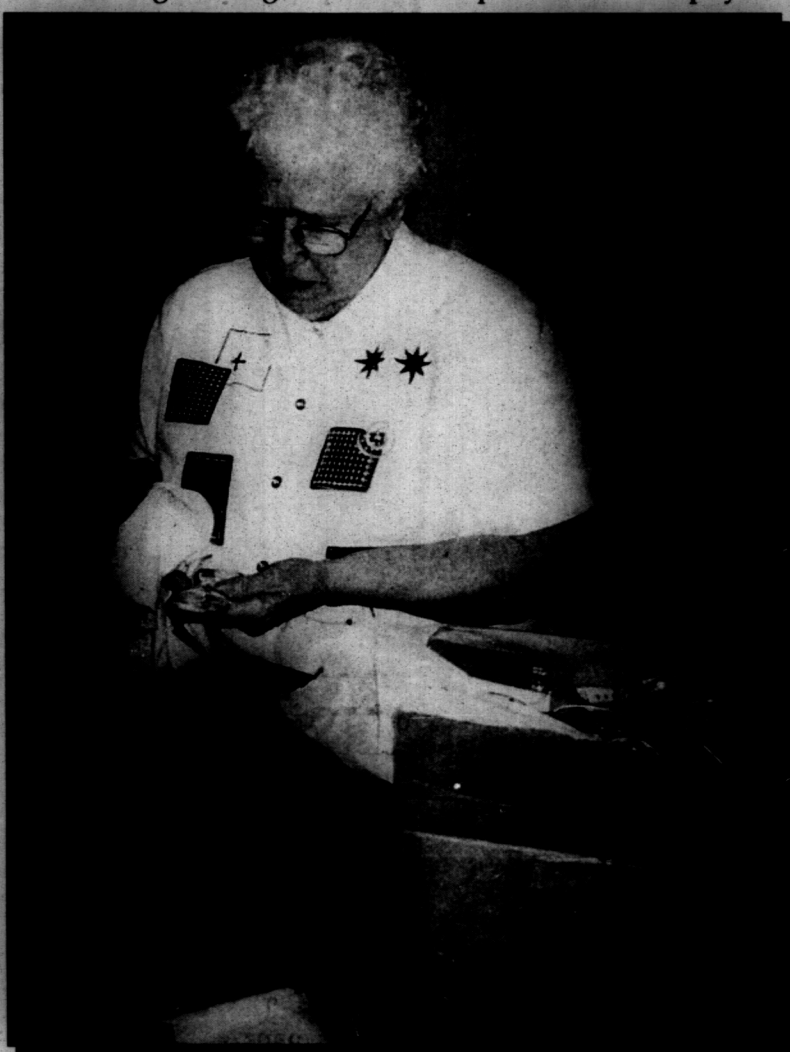
tified patients to invite them to church and to offer more information about Christianity and the plan of salvation.

"It is wonderful to see so many people get involved in this ministry," Foreman remarked.

Although Foreman has never been formally trained, her knowledge and practical experience aid many grateful Hondurans.

Foreman deliberately establishes the clinics in areas where no optometrists practice, so the clinics often are the only venue those with poor eyesight have to acquire the help they need.

If an optometrist practices in an area, Foreman refers residents of that area to the professional for examinations. She then gives the patients glasses based on their prescriptions.



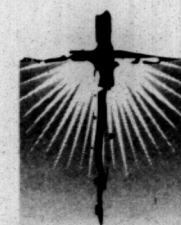
EYEGLOSS COORDINATOR — Donna Savage of Central Church in Marion, Ohio, is the stateside coordinator for the eyeglass ministry of international missionary Jo Anne Foreman. Savage and other women from the Ohio church clean the eyeglasses and her son, John Savage, determines the prescription with a lens meter. (Photo by Jo Anne Foreman)

country's efforts to repair roads and bridges to their original conditions.

Ministering to Hondurans since 1978, Foreman teaches discipleship classes, initiates Bible studies, works with communities to plant churches, and plans and conducts the eye clinics.

NEA mum on task force

WASHINGTON (BP) — The National Education Association (NEA) has been unusually silent about a task force formed to determine how to integrate homosexual themes into public school curriculums while working to "reduce and eliminate intolerance and insensitivity toward gays and lesbians in our society," according to an Aug. 15 CNSNews.com report. The NEA's "Gay and Lesbian Issues Task Force" was established at the July NEA convention for the purpose of avoiding a drawn-out debate over homosexual issues on the convention floor. Then NEA backed off a pro-homosexuality measure known as the "New B" resolution at its convention. The draft resolution called for the development of curriculum and institutional materials along with programs designed to meet the needs of homosexual faculty members and students. NEA spokeswoman Kathleen Lyons indicated Aug. 14 that the NEA will not talk with the press about the Gay and Lesbian Issues Task Force until the group actually produces its report in February 2002. Lyons, instead, chose to release remarks made by NEA President Bob Chase explaining the NEA position. "[The] resolutions committee [withdrew] Resolution 'New B,' and instead [called] for the establishment of a task force to look at the issues relating to sexual orientation in a thorough and meaningful way," Chase said in the statement. "Let me be clear: in no way is the NEA backing away from the important issues raised by the resolution. We will not allow our policy or our discussions to be dictated by any outside group, particularly those that wish to demagogue on the issue."



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Many recipients of the glasses are believers who have not been able to read their Bibles because of their poor eyesight.

As GAs learned how Foreman seeks to share the love of Jesus by meeting the immediate physical needs of the Hondurans, they began collecting glasses from their communities and congregations.

GA magazines design editor Barbara Massey noted that GAs are always eager to help missionaries succeed.

"This is a direct example of learning of a need and working together to meet that need," Massey said.

Individuals or churches interested in participating in the eyeglass ministry in the future may send glasses to John Savage, 3550 Maple Grove Road, Marion, OH 43302.

For information about GAs, in Southern Baptist churches, call WMU's Customer Service at (800) 968-7301 or visit www.gapassport.com.

Looking back

10 years ago

Jerry Clower of Yazoo City and Grand Ole Opry fame announces his intention to nominate Jess Moody for president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1992. Clower makes the statement during a recent visit to the Baptist Building in Jackson.

20 years ago

Roy Collum, director of the Evangelism Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board for 11 years, retires and observes, "If I were entering the pastorate instead of retiring as evangelism director, I'd preach more sermons on hell."

50 years ago

The probable opening of Glorieta Assembly in New Mexico—the newest campground owned by the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville—by the summer of 1952 is in sight, according to John L. Hill, who is in charge of promotion of the assembly.

Speaker tags 'hurry sickness' as epidemic

GLORIETA, N.M.(BP) — John Tadlock says there is an epidemic of "hurry sickness" in today's run-as-fast-as-you-can world.

"Everyone is busy. Everyone uses the words, 'There aren't enough hours in a day.'" However, he said days have the same number of hours they always have.

Tadlock, collegiate ministries group leader with the Baptist General Association of Virginia, spoke to a group during Collegiate Week at LifeWay Glorieta Conference Center in New Mexico.

Hurry sickness, he said, is "the continuous struggle to participate in more and more events in less and less time, frequently in the face of opposition of other people."

"We have faxes, e-mails, voice mail, pay at the pump, and microwaves — all this stuff designed to take less time so we will have more time. But, you know, it doesn't work that way," he said.

Thirty-four years ago some members of Congress predicted that by the turn of the century one of the main problems in the United States would be what people would do with all their spare time, he noted.

With all the "new" time-saving devices, the U.S. work week would be cut to about 30 hours, they had predicted.

"Now, tell me, how many of you have all that spare time?" he asked. "You may have hurry sickness if you are constantly speeding up the pace of your daily activities."

"If you are approaching a stop light and you judge which lane to get in based

on the make and model of the cars already there, you probably have hurry sickness."

"If you choose a lane at Wal-Mart based not only the number of people in the lane, but by doing a mental tabulation of the number of items they have in their carts, you probably have hurry sickness," Tadlock said.

"You know you have a bad case if you

even keep track of the people in the other lanes and you calculate if they are moving more quickly than you are and you are upset if they get through their lane before you do," he added.

He said a second symptom of hurry sickness is becoming "polyphasic," when a person is always trying to do more than one thing at a time. "You're never satisfied with

how much you are accomplishing, are you?" he asked. "You're always doing at least two things simultaneously — talking on the phone and typing on the computer, reading a book, and watching television."

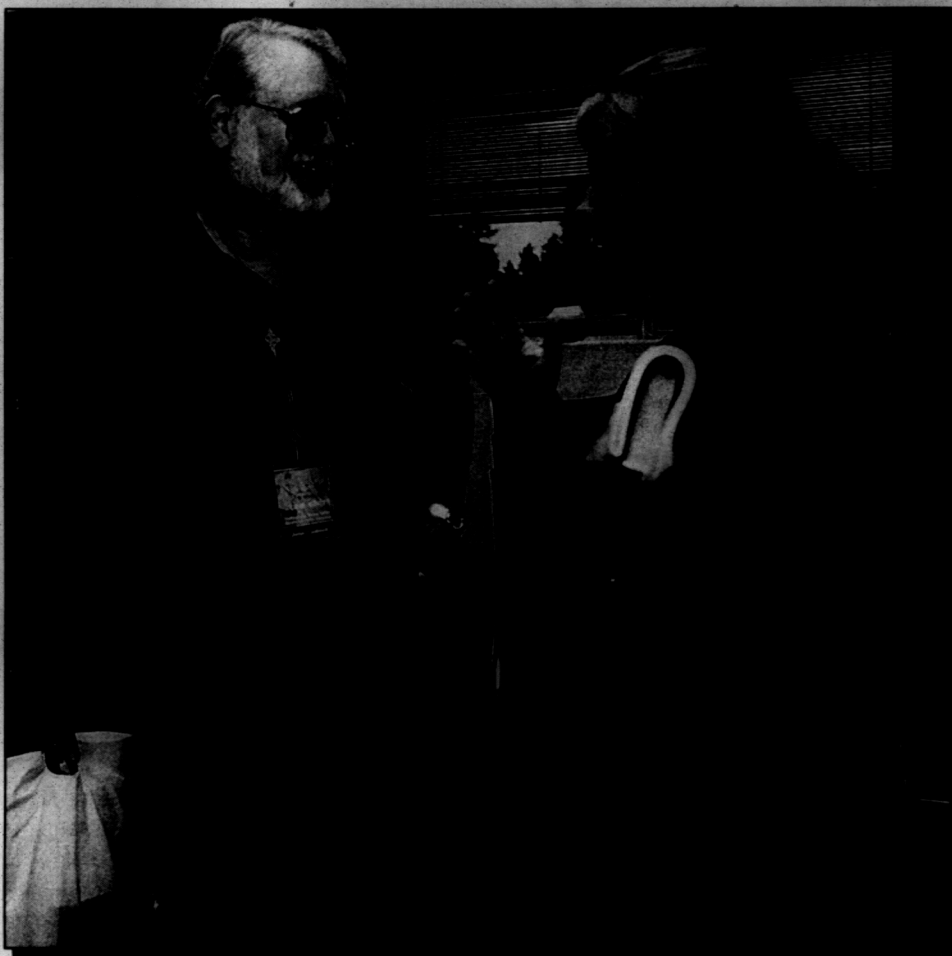
"We use words to keep us from listening to God. To listen, you have to be still and quiet. The importance of listening to God cannot be overstated."

Busyness also erodes a person's capacity to love. "We lose the capacity to love God and others," Tadlock said. "Hurry and love are fundamentally opposed."

He said a danger of constant activity is getting addicted to hurry. "We live in such a state of adrenaline arousal that we can't slow down."

So, what can be done? "We have to ruthlessly delete hurry from our lives," Tadlock said. "The opposite of hurry isn't slow. The opposite of hurry is rest."

"God wants us to understand the importance of rest, of sleep. Maybe the most spiritual thing you can do tonight is to get a good night's sleep," Tadlock counseled. "You can't be loving to anyone if you're tired."



TIME OUT — John Tadlock (left) and Robin Day, a student at University of Utah, visit after Tadlock, collegiate ministries group leader for the Baptist General Association of Virginia, discussed today's fast-paced life during Collegiate Week at LifeWay Glorieta Conference Center. (Photo by Morris Abernathy)

Ag Missions meeting set for Sept. 7-8

The Agricultural Missions Foundation (AMF), in cooperation with the Men's Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, will sponsor a conference September 7-8 at Judson Church in Brentwood, Tenn. The focus of the conference will be the importance of agricultural missions as an effective Gospel tool.

Among the speakers for the meeting will be agricultural missionaries:

- Kenneth Bowie, who serves in Peru.
- Jon Zeiger, who manages an International Mission Board project in Asia.
- Jerry Bedsole, who retired in 1996 after almost 30 years of service in Ethiopia.

The conference will get underway at 7 p.m. on September 7 at the host hotel, the Holiday Inn Brentwood, and will convene for the main conference at 9 a.m. the following day at Judson Church.

"The goal of the conference is to get more agricultural missions fellowships organized throughout the South. The need is so great around the world that an expanded AMF is a must for meeting the growing opportunities of the future," said Gene Triggs of Madison, an AMF organizer and 30-year charter member.

For more information, contact Harold or Joyce Watson at (601) 857-0066. E-mail: hwatso@aol.com.

Most Vermont civil unions going to out-of-staters

WASHINGTON (BP and local reports) — A year after Vermont became the first state to grant marriage rights to same-sex couples in the form of civil unions, a state review commission found that most unions went to out-of-state residents, CNSNews.com reported.

At least one civil union is being used to challenge marriage laws in another state.

Bill Apao, director of Public Health Statistics with the Vermont Department of Health, said as of the week of Aug. 6, 2,554 civil unions had been granted to same-sex couples since the law went into effect on July 1, 2000. Of those, 2,044 unions went to out-of-state residents, he said.

The passing of civil unions legislation in April 2000 caused an uproar in Vermont that led to a Republican takeover of the House for the first time in 16 years.

The controversial legislation also inspired movements to either amend state constitutions or pass laws preventing civil unions in Mississippi, Nebraska, Massachusetts, and Maine.

In Georgia, a same-sex couple is using their civil union to

challenge that state's child custody laws. If the court approves a civil union as the equivalent of marriage in Georgia, that would amount to a judicial creation of same-sex marriage and would set a precedent for 48 states outside Vermont and Georgia to have civil unions considered in their states, Staver said.

The American Civil Liberties Union has filed a brief in support of the claim of the same-sex couple.

Several Republican lawmakers and a few Democrats in the Vermont House recently filed a friend of the court brief urging the Georgia appeals court to uphold the lower court's ruling.

Republican Nancy Sheltra, a co-signer and an opponent of civil unions, said the legislators wanted to make the statement that civil unions were not marriage under Vermont law and "our intent was not for the law to allow for this type of situation."

Depending on how the Georgia court decides, the ruling can ultimately be appealed to the Georgia Supreme Court.

If the court rules on the constitutionality of the Federal Defense of Marriage Act, it could go to the U.S. Supreme Court.

If the court rules on state law, then it will stop at the Georgia Supreme Court level, Staver said.

The Vermont Civil Union Review Commission heard from homosexual advocacy groups that legislatures in Rhode Island, Hawaii, Washington, California, and Connecticut are considering proposals modeled on Vermont's civil unions.

The 11-member commission, which includes two House members and two state senators, also looked at whether there was an undue burden on the court system for dissolution of civil unions.

Civil unions haven't been around long enough to see break-ups, said Craig Bensen, vice president of Take It to the People, a grassroots organization opposed to civil unions.

"You've got to get five years under your belt before you start seeing a significant number of break-ups," he said.

The commission looked at the consequences of the law and its impact on other states, Bensen said.

"We're getting more of 'the sky isn't falling, there aren't

any problems, there will be no impact' — which are the same lines we heard when they were getting ready to push this thing through last year," he said.

In recent months, civil unions have been going almost exclusively to out-of-state residents as the number of eligible Vermont couples who wanted to form partnerships — just over 500 at last count — already have performed the ceremony.

After Vermonters, civil unions are most popular with residents of New York, Massachusetts, and California.

Unions also have been granted to couples from Canada, Mexico, Great Britain, Australia, the Netherlands, Germany, India, Guatemala, and Venezuela.

Female couples applying for civil unions outnumber males by about two-to-one.

According to Census 2000 figures, there are 4,774 same-sex couples in Mississippi, where several years ago lawmakers passed and former Governor Kirk Fordice signed into law a bill removing the possibility of legal recognition of same-sex civil unions from other states.

LifeWay marks 100th; plans third Miss. store

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (BP and local reports) — LifeWay Christian Stores personnel, customers, and Southern Baptist leaders celebrated the milestone of 100 LifeWay stores Aug. 16 at the grand opening of the Knoxville (Tenn.) west store.

"We're here for one reason and one reason alone and that is to do the work of ministry," said Mark Scott, president of the national chain owned and operated by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC).

"When you come into one of our stores, we believe every one of our products offers a biblical solution" to life's challenges, Scott said. He noted that the new store is the second in Knoxville and the 10th in Tennessee.

LifeWay plans to open its third Mississippi bookstore in Gulfport on October 8. The new facility, which will join Jackson and Tupelo bookstores, will be located in Crosswoods Center at the intersection of Interstate 10 and U.S. Highway 49.

Scott said the idea for a chain of bookstores originated with J.M. Frost, the first corresponding secretary of what was then called the Sunday School Board.

Frost served 1891-93 and 1896-1916, but the stores did not materialize during his administration. In 1925, the board purchased the Baptist Book Concern of Louisville, Ky., as its first store.

Later, the name was changed to Baptist Book Store and, in 1998, the chain became LifeWay Christian



SIERRA CELEBRATES OPENING — Jennifer McReynolds (left) and Wendi Green of the Christian singing group Sierra sign CDs at the 100th LifeWay Christian Store grand opening. McReynolds' 2-year-old son Jacob is looking at the Veggie Tales with great interest. (Photo by Morris Abernathy)

Stores following the SBC-approved name change for the Sunday School Board to LifeWay.

James T. Draper, Jr., president of LifeWay Christian Resources, observed that with the growth of LifeWay Christian Stores, "we're living out someone else's dreams."

In 1973, the Sunday School Board opened two retail stores named LifeWay. "They didn't thrive. It was a dream before its time," he said, noting that the stores were later closed but the name was retained for possible future use.

"It's not unusual in one of our stores to see someone pray to receive Christ," Draper said. "The vision to share Christ is the vision we have for our stores."

Ted Warren, executive vice president and chief operating officer of LifeWay Christian Resources, said, "We're not just about doing budgets, selling books, and Bibles. We're about meeting the needs of people."

When a person comes through the door of a LifeWay store, Warren said, employees never know the potential, life-changing spiritual impact that could be made from the visit.

"Affecting lives for eternity is the reason we're here," he said.

Bruce Robinson, chairman of LifeWay trustees and pastor of West Lonsdale Church, Knoxville, said, "I believe with all my heart that this store is uniquely designed and strategically located to do ministry for many years to come."

MBHC hosts anniversary workshop

The Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission (MBHC) will host a church anniversary workshop on October 13 at First Church, Clinton. The workshop is designed for Mississippi Baptist churches celebrating 10, 25, 50, 75, 100, 125, 150, 175, and 200-year anniversaries in 2002, 2003, or 2004, but all other churches are also invited to attend.

Topics will include the value of Christian church anniversary celebrations; how to choose the type of anniversary desired by the church; the methodology of planning an anniversary; how to write church history; and how to access MBHC resources.

MBHC executive secretary Edward L. McMillan reports that 24 Mississippi Baptist churches and one association representing 2,950 years of service are celebrating significant anniversaries this year, with 54 churches celebrating significant anniversaries in 2002.

For more information on the workshop and the work of MBHC, contact Rachel A. Pyron at P.O. Box 4024, Clinton, MS 39058. Telephone: (601) 925-3434. E-mail: mbhc@mc.edu.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS

One hundred years ago America was still young. William McKinley was President. A new century was still fresh, in its beginning stages, and then Mrs. Montye Gillon was born in the outskirts of Grenada County.

Recently, I received a call from one of Gillon's nieces informing me that Aunt Montye was going to be having her 100th birthday, August 7, 2001. She had heard that I was going to be in the Grenada area and wondered if I could stop by and see this remarkable lady.

It wasn't as though I did not know and had not had a connection with her, because over 50 years ago her pastor was my dad. At the time, I was the youngest of three boys in our family, and Aunt Montye remembered me and I remembered her.

The thing that she recalled about me was that I was the little boy who would get up on Sunday mornings, as everyone was getting ready to go to church, and go out with her to pick the beautiful flower arrangement that she carried to the Lord's House. The thing I remembered about her was that she played the piano and was an active, energetic, wonderful lady.

On Tuesday afternoon, the day of her birthday celebration, I went by her house. When I knocked on her door and heard her cheerful, "Come on in!" I did so. We began conversing as though it was only last spring that we had been



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

picking flowers. What a joy it was to see, visit, and be blessed by this remarkable 100-year-old mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and great-great-grandmother!

It did not take very long to lose sight of how long she had lived and to be overwhelmed by how she had lived. Oh, I know that it is a remarkable thing — to live 100 years! Just imagine — 36,525 days — that is a big deal! What she did during those days is even more significant.

She lived her life, and continues to live it, in service to others. For a quarter-of a century she was a postmistress. Beyond that, she served in the community in a multiplicity of ways — including being the pianist for both the Baptist and Methodist churches in Gore Springs.

The Methodists lost their pianist and Aunt Montye said that the Holy Spirit told her to go and play for them, so off she went — providing music for the early service at the Methodist church and then coming to play for the Baptist church. Also, up to now, at Christmas time she has gotten a

gift for every member of her family, which now numbers scores and scores.

In the middle of our visit, nothing would do her but for us to drink a cup of coffee together and eat a piece of fresh blueberry cake and a piece of chocolate pie. I started to help her up out of her seat to go over to the kitchen table, but she was up and moving around faster than me!

The longer I visited, the worse I felt! I sat there taking inventory and realized that her eyesight was sharper than mine, her hearing better than mine, her mind clearer than mine, and I soon found out that her appetite was bigger than mine!

During the visit of about an hour, over a dozen phone calls came in. While I sat listening to half of a conversation, I was just amazed as friends and family called and she consistently served them with a choice blessing. Without exception, she spoke a word of encouragement, gave affirmation, and expressed heart-felt gratitude. It was amazing! Of course, with anyone who reaches a milestone such as a 100-year birth-

day celebration, the question that pleads to be asked is, "How did you live to be so old?" So, I asked her.

She answered with a somewhat disarming, "I don't know, but one thing is for sure, you need to learn to be happy. If you are not happy where you are and doing what you are doing, get where you will be happy and enjoy what you are doing."

For Aunt Montye, it was not just a "feel-good" philosophy of life, but a commitment to finding a way to be happy, whatever the circumstances may be. In a hundred years, she has seen a lot of sickness, had numerous surgeries, lost a house to fire, lost her husband to death when he was just 50 years old, and yet, through it all, she kept on singing, smiling, and laughing.

The Apostle Paul said, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." There is a genuine, spiritual dimension of happiness and contentment that the Lord can bring, regardless of what life may bring.

If you find that, you may live to be a hundred. If you don't find it, it doesn't matter how many years you live, they will just be years of misery. If you do find it, even if you don't live a century, they will be delightful and helpful years.

Aunt Montye, thanks for the birthday party! Thanks for a hundred years of blessings and for the positive, exciting way you point us to the next hundred years!

Henry: LifeWay still committed to campuses

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP) — "The reorganization that is happening in LifeWay's Church Resources Division will in no way diminish LifeWay's commitment to ministering to college students," said Bill Henry, director of the National Collegiate Ministry (NCM) department at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville.

Speaking to a group of state Baptist campus ministry directors and associates at a luncheon, Henry, of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, said, "Folks, our future looks good. There is a tremendous ministry going on on the college campuses and in the churches."

"There is wonderful work going on with the college students and by the college students. I thank you for all the work you do."

Henry said he has "lots of mixed emotions" about leaving the position as head of LifeWay's NCM department he has held for the last 17 years.

He will become managing director of Network Partnerships Oct. 1 when the division reorganization is implemented.

"My whole career has been working with college students. I've done this for 31 years, first at the Tennessee Baptist Convention and here at LifeWay."

"There have been a lot of mixed emotions for me this week," he said. "While I am looking forward to the new position God has for me, I'm going to miss the day-to-day contact I've had with all of you and with the students," Henry said.

John Garner, who will be the director of ministry team leadership in the new LifeWay Church Resources plan, said, "LifeWay is going through lots of changes. That's a fact, but let me assure you LifeWay has been, is, and will be here for college students."

"We want to help you get the programs and materials to help you minister to your students," he said. "We want to help this ministry grow by creating a synergy between college and campus ministry."

John Kramp, director of the LifeWay Church Resources operations group, said, "I really am excited to see how college ministry has grown. I'm committed to reaching college-age kids."

"I was touched by the Baptist campus ministries when I was a student and I know what an influence you have. There are changes happening at LifeWay, some good changes," said Kramp, will become director of church ministry solutions.

"We're putting our focus back on the churches. We are going to listen more, but transitions have not always been handled

well. Let's just put that elephant on the table now. We haven't always made smooth transitions, but I want to tell you I know of no agenda regarding collegiate work that would be something you wouldn't like," Kramp said.

Kramp told the campus ministry directors that while only one position on the organization chart carries the title of National Collegiate Ministry, others will be involved.

"There are people who will be working in publishing and others working on events. LifeWay's commitment to college students is still there."

"These are important times for us and for this work," Kramp

said. "My optimism is high. I think the future of student ministry is very bright."

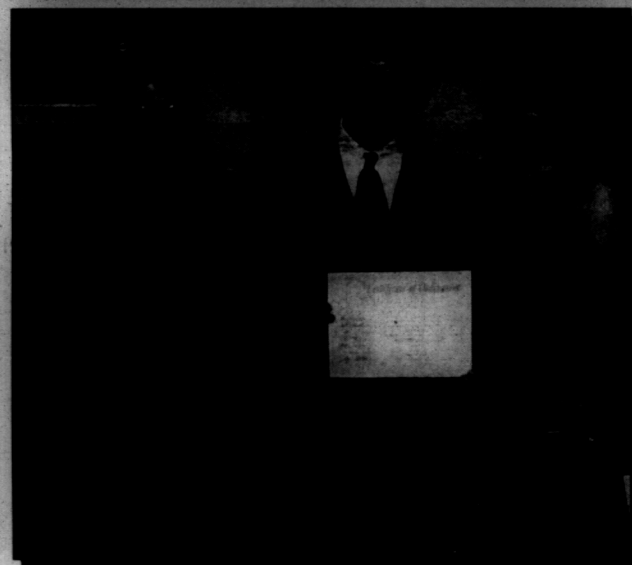
Henry told the group, "The decisions that will be made regarding National Collegiate Ministry will be in good hands with these two men."

"They share my vision and my excitement about what is happening on our campuses and in our churches."



Henry

NAMES IN THE NEWS



Reid and the Williamses

Joey Williams, worship pastor at Hillcrest Church, Jackson, was ordained to the ministry on July 29 at Parkway Church, Natchez. Pictured (from left) are Jim Reid, minister of youth at Parkway Church; Williams and his wife Jennifer.

ory of his parents. Since the inception of the scholarship fund in 1983, approximately \$63,000 has been awarded to 11 members of First Church.

J. R. Eaton was licensed to the ministry on Aug. 5 by Amity Church, Chickasaw Association. Eaton (right) is pictured receiving his certificate from Gary Roberson, pastor.

Kermit McGregor, president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, recently attended a Baptist Memorial Health Care (BMHC) board meeting at the Baptist Memorial Hospital for Women in Memphis, Tenn.

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J i l l Harrington has been awarded a \$6,000 scholarship from the Lawrence and Louise Palmer Scholarship Fund of First Church, Amory. Harrington is currently pursuing a master's degree at Southwestern Seminary. The scholarship fund was established at First Church by Dick Palmer in memory of his parents. Since the inception of the scholarship fund in 1983, approximately \$63,000 has been awarded to 11 members of First Church.

Pictured (from left, front row) are Milton Magee, board president; Cameron Dean; McGregor; Patricia Stanford; and Tom Sumrall; (back row) John Keeton Jr.; Allen Puckett III; William Preston Jr.; Wendell Rogers; and Stephen Reynolds, president and CEO, BMHC.



Members of the BMHC Board

The First Baptist Church of Leland, MS is making available a series of sermons delivered by Jon Doler on the subject of grief.

Sermon titles are:

- ◆ When Death Becomes A Friend
- ◆ This is The Day the Lord Hath Made
- ◆ Don't Go to Sleep When Your Friends are Hurting
- ◆ Lord, Take My Life.
- ◆ May God's Will Be Done
- ◆ When Life is A Gift
- ◆ The Sufferings of This Present Hour
- ◆ Thou Shalt Not Steal My Grief

These sermons were preached by Doler following the 11-year illness and death of his wife, Scotti. These eight sermons on tape are available from the church for \$20.00.

You may order by mail FBC Leland, P.O. Box 286, Leland, MS 38756, by phone (662) 686-7357 or by e-mail fbcl@bellsouth.net.

Denson set to headline SYATP rally

Christian vocalist Al Denson will headline a special See You At the Pole (SYATP) rally from 6:30-9:30 p.m. on September 19 at Robinson-Hale football stadium on the campus of Mississippi College in Clinton. Chip Miskelly, a member of Crossgates Church, Brandon, and owner of Miskelly Furniture in Pearl, will be master of ceremonies.

Sponsors of the event include area churches; First Priority ministry of Jackson; Metro Association, Jackson; Rankin Association, Brandon; and Youth for Christ.

"We are asking all churches to hold combined youth worship services at this rally, and that is why it is being held on Wednesday night," said Rick Clark, First Priority president.

"It is time for all of us to come together and let the students see the powerful force they have in Mississippi," he added.

Cost is \$3 per person, and youth leaders may bring one check to cover the cost of all attendees in their group. For more information, call (877) 815-8335 or (601) 854-5307.

Homecomings

Elon, Macon: Sept. 9; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by lunch and fellowship; singing featuring Shirley Battle, 1 p.m.; Bob Myers, former pastor, speaker; Allen H. Mapp Jr., pastor.

New Prospect, Brookhaven: Sept. 9; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m., followed by noon meal in fellowship hall; Robert K. Speights, guest speaker; Buddy Reynaud, music; 1:15 p.m. service with special music provided by the Ladies Trio and the New Prospect Ladies Ensemble; Willie T. Welch is pastor.



Roberson and Eaton